

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 6767

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: PEPR PGOV PL XF
SUBJ: LUERS TESTIMONY ON EASTERN EUROPE BEFORE HIRC

REF: A. STATE 194188, B. BUDAPEST 3096

1. OUR APPROACH TO RELATIONS WITH POLAND SHOULD CONTINUE
TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE STRONG TIES OF HISTORY AND PSYCHOLOGY
WHICH PULL POLISH ATTITUDES WESTWARD, ESPECIALLY TOWARD
THE UNITED STATES. THE POLES DO NOT ACCEPT THE
LABEL OF "EAST EUROPEAN", FEELING THAT THEIR CULTURAL,
AND ABOVE ALL THEIR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE, PLACES THEM
ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THAT AMBIGUOUS BOUNDARY
DIVIDING EAST FROM WEST IN EUROPE. THEIR CONCERN TO
MAINTAIN LINKS TO THE WEST INCLUDING THE "SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP" MANY PROFESS TO SEE WITH THE
UNITED STATES WHERE SO MANY POLES HAVE FAMILY
TIES, HEIGHTENS THEIR INTEREST IN TRADE RELATIONS
AND CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL EXCHANGES,
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AND GIVES US A CERTAIN LEVERAGE IN PRESSING FOR
POLISH COOPERATION ON ISSUES WE CONSIDER
IMPORTANT, SUCH AS FREEDOM OF TRAVEL AND DIVIDED
FAMILIES.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT POLAND,
VICTIMIZED BY AN UNFORTUNATE GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION

AND DEPENDENT UPON SOVIET POWER FOR A GUARANTEE OF ITS POSTWAR BOUNDARIES (WHICH, BY AND LARGE, EVEN THOSE POLES ANTIPATHETIC TOWARDS THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM AND REGIME REGARD FAVORABLY), FACES SIGNIFICANT CONSTRAINTS AGAINST APPEARING TOO COZY IN ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE WEST. MOREOVER, AS OFFICIAL AND OTHER POLES TELL US, SINCERELY AND, WE BELIEVE CORRECTLY, THEY HAVE A REAL NATIONAL STAKE IN DETENTE. DETERIORATION IN US-USSR RELATIONS, THEY SAY, AFFECTS THEM DIRECTLY AND ADVERSELY IN THE FORM OF INCREASED SOVIET PRESSURE TOWARD ORTHODOXY AND CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN THEIR ROOM TO MANEUVER IN THE ROLE THEY WOULD LIKE TO PLAY AS A BRIDGE, OF SORTS, BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

3. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE THAT WHILE WE SHOULD MAINTAIN OUR DIFFERENTIATED POLICY APPROACH TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE AND GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE TO LIBERALIZING TENDENCIES IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY AT THE PRESENT TIME WE WOULD NOT BENEFIT THE POLES BY GIVING UNDUE PUBLICITY TO THEIR RELATIVELY GOOD RECORD IN CERTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS AREAS. THERE PROBABLY IS AN ANALOGY HERE BETWEEN POLAND AND HUNGARY, JUDGING FROM BUDAPEST'S COMMENTS IN REF (B). POLAND, AT LEAST, WOULD NOT BE WELL SERVED BY BEING SINGLED OUT AS A FRONT-RUNNER IN CONFERRING

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GREATER HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS ON ITS CITIZENRY THAT ITS NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY THE USSR.

4. WE THEREFORE WOULD ADVOCATE KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON PARTICULARLY VIA ECONOMIC MEANS, FOR IMPROVEMENT IN POLISH HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE (FOR WHICH THERE IS AMPLE ROOM) -- BUT NOT GOING OUT OF OUR WAY TO PUBLICIZE EITHER THE STICK OF SUCH PRESSURE OR THE CARROT OF PRAISE FOR THE RELATIVE

MODERATION IN THE REGIME'S TREATMENT OF, E.G., THE CHURCH OR DISSIDENCE IN THE COUNTRY.
SCHAUFEL

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